

**COAST GUARD
CASUALTY ASSISTANCE
CALLS OFFICER

HANDBOOK**

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
OFFICE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL
COMPENSATION DIVISION

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The death of a relative in the service is one of the biggest losses a family can suffer. Next to that is the news that a service member is missing and an organized search is being conducted to find them.

You have been assigned as the Casualty Assistance Calls Officer (CACO) to assist the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) or beneficiary of a service member who is either dead, seriously ill, or missing. You are now the “face” of the Coast Guard to this family. You are responsible to notify the PNOK, determine their needs, explain and help them apply for their benefits, and assist in funeral details, **therefore, your CACO duties normally take precedence over all other assigned duties.** In performing your duties, you will be supported by your Integrated Support Command Decedent Affairs Officer (DAO), Commandant (G-WPM-2) Decedent Affairs Program Manager, the Department of Veterans Affairs and other agencies.

Your CACO duties fall into three general categories:

- 1) PNOK Notification.
- 2) Funeral Arrangements.
- 3) Survivor Benefits.

You’ll make at least three visits to the PNOK, one visit for each general category. The handbook has a section for each general category and is designed to provide a quick review of your CACO responsibilities prior to each visit with the family. This handbook is to be used in conjunction with:

- **Coast Guard Casualty Assistance Guide.**
- Chapter 11, Personnel Manual, COMDTINST M1000.6A.
- Chapter 18, Personnel Manual, COMDTINST M1000.6A.
- Chapter 5, Personnel and Pay Procedures Manual, PSCINST M1000.2A
- Enclosure 7, Personnel and Pay Procedures Manual, PSCINST M1000.2A

You are not an expert regarding the various services and benefits available to the family. You serve as the family’s primary coordinator for these services and benefits. It is always appropriate to respond, “I don't know but, I'll find out and get back to you.”

We recommend you take and review the appropriate section(s) of this handbook before each family visit.

You have embarked on an assignment that is one of the most important, and, hopefully, one of the most rewarding duties you will have during your Coast Guard career. You have a moral obligation to be compassionate and helpful to the family of the deceased service member. *The service member’s family will long remember and appreciate your patience, understanding and helpfulness.*

SECTION 2: THE ROLE OF THE CASUALTY ASSISTANCE CALLS OFFICER (CACO)

A. CACO Overall Responsibilities.

Your CACO responsibilities normally take precedence over all other duties. If there is doubt, ask your Integrated Support Command (ISC) Decedent Affairs Officer (DAO).

As the CACO, you are the "team leader" in assisting the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK), as well as their messenger, resource coordinator and administrator. You should deal with the PNOK in the same manner that you would like your family dealt with if you were the casualty. You should stay in regular contact with the DAO and inform the DAO immediately of problems, complaints, or next of kin dissatisfaction.

B. CACO Specific Responsibilities.

1. Notification Visit.

- ☐ Personally notify the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) when their relative is:
 - Dead.
 - Seriously ill or injured (notification may be done by phone).
 - Duty Status-Whereabouts Unknown (DUSTWUN).
 - Missing.
- ☐ Express the Commandant's condolences/concern to the PNOK and give a brief explanation of the circumstances.
- ☐ Determine if any Secondary Next of Kin (SNOK) needs to be notified, assist if requested.
- ☐ Keep in touch with the member's command to obtain additional details of the casualty.
- ☐ Keep the family informed regarding the search efforts or the member's remains.
- ☐ Advise that CO's letter of circumstances/condolences is to be prepared within 48 hours of casualty incident.
- ☐ Determine PNOK's need for support and immediate financial assistance.
- ☐ Arrange for Death Gratuity with Personnel Service Center (PSC) (SES).
- ☐ Offer to arrange a Chaplain for pastoral care.

2. Funeral/Burial Arrangement Visit .

- ☐ Determine the Person who is Authorized to Direct Disposition (PADD) of the remains.
- ☐ Explain the services and benefits available to the PADD, including funeral expense allowances and Funeral/Interment options.
- ☐ Obtain PADD decision on the Disposition Instruction Form.
- ☐ Relay PADD's decision to ISC DAO.
- ☐ Obtain name and telephone number of local receiving funeral home.

- ☐ Coordinate details between funeral directors.
- ☐ Monitor progress of transport of remains and keep next of kin informed.
- ☐ Offer to help plan funeral/memorial services/military funeral honors.
- ☐ Assist dependents with travel arrangements to/from funeral site.
- ☐ Attend the funeral.

3. Survivor Benefits Visit.

- ☐ Explain the services and benefits available to the PNOK and designated beneficiary(s).
- ☐ Help the PNOK and designated beneficiary(s) apply for their services and benefits.
- ☐ Monitor collection, inventory and shipment of personal effects.
- ☐ Arrange for dependents' continued occupancy in government quarters, if desired, through the service member's ISC or arrange for Basic Allowance for Quarters (BAQ) equivalent for 180-day period following member's death with PSC (SES).
- ☐ Remain available to further assist with difficulties that may arise during the family's adjustment to the tragic event.

SECTION 3: PERSONNEL CASUALTY and NEXT OF KIN

A. Introduction - Whenever a “Coast Guard Member” becomes a “Personnel Casualty,” the Coast Guard is responsible to notify the member’s Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) and assist the PNOK with any benefits or entitlements they may have.

B. Personnel Casualties.

1) Who is a Personnel Casualty? - The following people are “Coast Guard Members” and have specific benefits when they become a “Personnel Casualty:”

- ☐ Active duty members, including reservists on EAD or ADSW.
- ☐ Civilian employees (death only).
- ☐ Public Health Service Officers detailed to the Coast Guard.
- ☐ Reservists (death only, if not on active duty).
- ☐ Separated, discharged, and retired members within 120 days of separation, discharge, or effective retirement date.
- ☐ Cadets.
- ☐ Dependents (death only).
- ☐ Retirees (death only).

2) What is a Casualty? - A “Coast Guard Member” becomes a “Personnel Casualty” when they:

- ☐ Die (killed in action, died of wounds, suicide, illness or any other cause).
- ☐ Are close to or near death due to a severe illness or injury or a suicide attempt.
- ☐ Are hospitalized with a condition that could lead to a disability retirement; or
- ☐ Are missing.
- ☐ DUSTWUN (Duty Status Whereabouts Unknown) – This is a temporary designation when a member’s actual status is not certain and the Commanding Officer must first search for them and gather the facts in order to make a proper status determination (UA/missing/ deceased).

C. Next of Kin.

1) Next of Kin, Primary (PNOK) - The Coast Guard is responsible to notify a member’s PNOK whenever the member becomes a personnel casualty. The PNOK is established by law and is listed below in order of precedence. The name and address of a member’s PNOK is listed on the member’s BAQ/Dependency (CG-4170A) form. In some cases, the Coast Guard member may have ignored the order of precedence listed below and listed someone else as their PNOK on the CG-4170A. In these cases, the CACO should consult the ISC DAO about whom to notify. PNOK order of precedence:

- ☐ Legal spouse; if no spouse,
- ☐ Eldest child over the age of 21 – sons of legal age take precedence over daughters of legal age; if no child over the age of 21.

- ☐ Father or Mother of the deceased. When parents live together, the father is the PNOK. When parent's separate/divorce before the member enters the Coast Guard, the parent who had legal custody when the member entered the Coast Guard, is the PNOK. In cases where the parents separate/divorce after the member entered the service, the parent designated to receive the majority of benefits is the PNOK.
- ☐ Brothers or Sisters of the deceased. Brothers of legal age take precedence over sisters of legal age.
- ☐ Other legal age blood relative.
- ☐ Friend.

D. **Next of Kin, Secondary (SNOK)** - The SNOK are individuals who are related to the member, who should be informed of the member's casualty status. Typically they are the member's parents, or children who are not living at home. Their contact information is usually listed on the CG-4170A. The Coast Guard is not responsible to notify the SNOK but may assist if it seems warranted. The Red Cross is responsible to notify any SNOK who are members of the Armed Forces. A uniformed member of the Coast Guard will notify the member's parents, if they are the SNOK, whenever the member dies, is missing, or captured as a result of either a hostile action or terrorist activity.

SECTION 4: THE NOTIFICATION VISIT.

A. Notification Policy.

1) Deceased, Missing or Captured Member - It is the policy of the Coast Guard to have a uniformed member of the Coast Guard personally notify the PNOK whenever a Coast Guard member dies, is missing, or captured. In addition, if the Coast Guard member dies, is missing, or captured as a result of either a hostile action or terrorist activity, a uniformed Coast Guard member will also notify the member's parents, if they are not the PNOK. Notifications for these reasons shall NEVER be made by phone and only between the hours of 0600 and 2400.

2) Seriously Injured or Ill Member- It is the policy of the Coast Guard to notify the PNOK of a seriously ill or injured member as fast as possible so they can immediately travel to be with the member. For this reason, seriously ill or injured notifications should be made immediately, regardless of the hour, and may be made by phone.

3) PNOK Already Notified - In cases where the PNOK have already been notified of the casualty by police, fire, or hospital, a uniformed Coast Guard member should make a formal visit to the PNOK to express the Commandant's condolences and let the family know that Coast Guard support is available.

B. Notification Process - The following is the typical process that occurs from the time a casualty occurs (dies, is missing, or captured) to the time the PNOK is notified of the casualty.

1) Coast Guard is notified of the casualty - A Coast Guard unit is informed of the casualty, either by a member of the unit (i.e. operational death), fire or police (i.e. auto accident) or the family itself (i.e. heart attack or cancer). The Coast Guard unit immediately notifies Flag Plot at 202-267-2100, their Area/District Command center, their ISC DAO and then issues a Personnel Casualty Report within 4 hours of notification.

2) Commandant/Decedent Affairs Officer notified – Flag Plot notifies the Commandant, the Coast Guard Chaplain, Coast Guard Investigative Services (CGIS) and the Coast Guard Decedent Affairs Officer. Simultaneously, the Coast Guard Decedent Affairs Officer (DAO) and the District Command Center contact the ISC DAO where the casualty occurred and the ISC DAO where the PNOK reside, if applicable, to ensure they are aware of the casualty.

3) PNOK is identified – The ISC DAO locates the member's current CG-4170A BAH/DEPENDENCY FORM and determines who is the PNOK as well as where they live. Section Three describes the PNOK order of precedence.

4) The PNOK's DAO is notified - If the PNOK lives in the AOR of a different ISC, the DAO where the casualty occurred notifies the DAO in the area of the PNOK of the casualty.

5) CACO Selected - The ISC DAO responsible for the AOR where the PNOK resides identifies the Coast Guard Command nearest the PNOK and tasks them to appoint a CACO to personally notify the PNOK. The Command appoints the CACO. This is how you got this duty.

6) CACO Support Person Identified – NEVER go to the PNOK alone! The Command/DAO locates a second person to go with you to make the notification. Preferably, this is a Military Chaplain. However, Corpsman, Police and Fire Chaplains, EAP Counselors can be asked to go along. You coordinate schedules with the support person. (Note - Uniform is Service Dress Blue, Tropical Blues in southern climates.)

7) Notification Letter Prepared – Prepare the notification letter, after verifying the details with the DAO, using one of the formats listed in Section 5. Note – You will read paragraph one of the letter to the PNOK, as the method to notify them of the casualty.

8) Print out Coast Guard Casualty Assistance Guide – The DAO will E-mail you the Coast Guard Casualty Assistance Guide. Print a copy to leave with the PNOK.

9) CACO and Support Person Locate PNOK Residence – Notification visits are not made before 0600 or after 2400, in most cases. You and your support person go immediately to the PNOK's residence. NEVER go to the PNOK alone. In cases where the PNOK lives in a remote area, ask local police for an escort to the residence. They can also help make the notification.

10) Notifying the PNOK - You, as the Commandant's direct representative, are responsible to notify the PNOK. The Chaplain is present as to offer comfort and emotional support; a "Safety Observer" role.

- ☐ Go to the residence, identify yourself, ask for the PNOK and ask to step inside the home. If asked what this is about, you respond, "I have a message for (Name of PNOK) from the Commandant of the Coast Guard. May we come inside?" (Note - ALWAYS go inside the home before making the notification.) If the PNOK is not at home, find out when they will arrive and set a time to return.
- ☐ Once inside, verify that you are actually talking to the PNOK. If children or others are present, you might ask to speak with the PNOK privately.
- ☐ You notify the PNOK by reading paragraph one ONLY of the notification letter.

"The Commandant of the Coast Guard deeply regrets to inform you that your (specify relationship, rate/rank, SSN) died on (date) at/aboard (place) as a result of (provide a brief description of cause of death). Your (specify relationship) died while in the service of his/her country. Please accept my most heartfelt sympathy in your great loss."

Note - Read the letter as soon as you are with the PNOK. The notification letter is designed to keep the notification as professional as possible. When you and a Chaplain, in Service Dress Blue, arrive unexpectedly at their residence, the PNOK already suspects why you are there. It only frustrates the PNOK if you delay the notification by trying to soften the news with phrases like, "I don't know how to tell you this, I cannot tell you how sorry I am, etc."

Give the letter to the PNOK.

- ☐ Expect a wide range of reactions from the PNOK, some of which will be very strong. Do not be defensive if next of kin blames the Coast Guard. Simply listen, and continue to offer your assistance.
- ☐ Do not offer any information about monetary or burial benefits during the notification process.

11) Answer PNOK Questions – Answer all PNOK questions, if you know the answer. If you don't know the answer, write down the question and promise to find the answer. You may give all facts and circumstances, known at the time about the casualty, to the PNOK. Do not avoid using the word "Dead." Questions will be 1) Are you sure it's him/her? 2) Where are the remains? 3) When will they come home? 4) Can we view the remains? 5) How will I pay for a funeral? 6) How will I pay my bills? If asked about money or funeral benefits, you can mention they are covered in the Coast Guard Casualty Assistance guide and that you would be glad to return later in the day or tomorrow to discuss them with the PNOK.

12) Commanding Officer's Letter to Family – Inform the PNOK that the member's Commanding Officer will send the PNOK a letter explaining the specific cause and circumstances of the casualty.

13) If CG has custody of remains – Inform PNOK that the CG will prepare the remains for transportation home and provide a military escort for the remains.

14) Verify the exact name, address and phone number(s) of the PNOK.

15) Determine Secondary next of kin (SNOK) – Determine where the SNOK are located. If the member is a casualty due to either hostile action or terrorist activity, a uniformed Coast Guard member will also notify the member's parents, if they are not the PNOK. In all other cases, the Coast Guard does not have a responsibility to notify the SNOK. However, we need to know where the SNOK live as the Coast Guard will eventually have to get them to the funeral. Here you will discover if any family members are not talking with each other. Offer to act as liaison between family members who refuse to talk directly with each other about casualty incident (e.g., divorced parents who won't converse directly with each other.)

16) Offer to call a family friend, pastor, or relative of the PNOK who can come assist the PNOK.

17) Arrange a time for a follow up visit to discuss funeral benefits.

18) CACO leaves the Coast Guard Casualty Assistance Guide and their contact phone number with the PNOK.

C. Notification Visit Checklist (1st Visit)

- Receive Personnel Casualty Report data from DAO _____
- Identify PNOK and location of Residence _____
- Identify support person (Chaplain, fire, police) _____
- Prepare notification letter with DAO _____
- Print out Coast Guard Casualty Assistance Guide _____
- Notify PNOK using notification letter _____
- Offer the Coast Guard's condolences/concerns _____
- Inform PNOK of current location of remains _____
- Inform PNOK of Coast Guard's primary care of remains _____
- Inform PNOK about Commanding Officer's letter _____
- Verify PNOK Name, address and phone Number(s) _____
- Advise PNOK, if an investigation is pending _____
- Identify and coordinate a family support group
(e.g., friends, minister/priest, relatives, worklife) before departing` _____
- Assure PNOK of your continued availability _____
- Leave Coast Guard Casualty Assistance Guide with PNOK _____
- Leave CACO name and phone number(s) with PNOK _____
- Arrange a time for a follow-up visit _____

Notification Visit Follow-Up Checklist

- Call ISC DAO immediately after leaving the PNOK. Inform the DAO
the time the PNOK was notified and confirm the PNOK's name and address. _____
- Get location of remains and expected travel itinerary from DAO _____
- Contact PSC (SES) for Death Gratuity (\$12,000) payment _____

D. Notification Letter Formats

- 1) Letter used to inform the Primary Next of Kin of a USCG Member's death.

**(ALWAYS PRESENTED IN PERSON BY A UNIFORMED
COAST GUARD MEMBER BETWEEN 0600 AND 2400)**

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Jones
123 Main Street
Somewhere, CA 95123

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Jones

The Commandant of the Coast Guard deeply regrets to inform you that your (specify relationship, rate/rank, SSN) died on (date) at/aboard (place) as a result of (provide a brief description of cause of death). Your (specify relationship) died while in the service of his/her country. Please accept my most heartfelt sympathy in your great loss.

We hope we can be of assistance to you in your bereavement. We will transport the remains with an escort to any place you designate. Also, we will allow you an amount toward funeral and interment expenses not to exceed \$6,900, for burial in a private cemetery or \$5,500 for a burial in a national cemetery.

(Name and Phone # of CACO or DAO) has been assigned to give you every possible assistance.

Please be assured of the heartfelt sympathy and prayers of your (specify relationship) shipmates.

(Name, rate/rank, and title of CACO's commanding officer)

2) Letter used to notify the Primary Next of Kin that a CG member is DUSTWUN, Missing, or Captured.

**(ALWAYS PRESENTED IN PERSON BY A UNIFORMED
COAST GUARD MEMBER BETWEEN 0600 AND 2400)**

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Jones
123 Main Street
Somewhere, CA 95123

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Jones

The Commandant of the Coast Guard regrets to inform you that your (specify relationship, name, rate/rank, SSN) is (missing, been declared a POW) as a result of (provide brief description of the cause and circumstances concerning missing status).

You may be assured that every effort is being made with personnel and facilities available to locate your (specify relationship). Your great anxiety in this situation is understood and when further information is available concerning your (specify relationship), you will be promptly notified. (Name and Phone # of CG Contact) has been assigned to give you every possible assistance.

(Name and Phone # of CACO or DAO) has been assigned to give you every possible assistance.

Please be assured of the heartfelt sympathy and prayers of your (specify relationship) shipmates at this time of heartache and uncertainty. I join you in prayer for (his/her) eventual (recovery alive, safe return).

(Name, rate/rank, and title of CACO's commanding officer)

3) Letter used to notify the Next of Kin that a CG member is seriously injured or sick.

(Should be done in person by a uniformed Coast Guard member. However, if speed of notification is an essential issue, the notification may be made by phone regardless of the hour)

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Jones
123 Main Street
Somewhere, CA 95123

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Jones

The Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, with great concern, informs you that your (specify relationship, name, rate/rank, SSN) is (critically or seriously ill or injured) as a result of (provide brief description of circumstances of illness or injury). This occurred on (date) at (specify location).

Your (specify relationship) is presently hospitalized at/on board (show location of place hospitalized) where you can be assured that (he/she) is receiving the best possible medical care. Your great anxiety is understood and when further reports are available concerning (his/her) condition you will be informed

The Coast Guard is authorized to pay for two family members to travel to the hospital.

(Name and Phone # of CACO or DAO) has been assigned to give you every possible assistance.

Please be assured of the heartfelt concern and prayers of your (specify relationship) shipmates at this time of uncertainty. I join you in prayer for his/her speedy recovery.

(Name, rate/rank, and title of CACO's commanding officer)

SECTION 5: THE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS VISIT(S)

- A. **Introduction** - Your next visit to the PNOK should focus on settling the funeral/burial arrangements. The purpose of the visit is to explain the different burial and reimbursement options to the Person Authorized to Direct the Disposition (PADD) and to have them give their disposition instructions on a signed "Disposition Instructions" form.

NEVER VISIT THE FAMILY BY YOURSELF. ALWAYS TAKE ANOTHER PERSON WITH YOU, PREFERABLY A CHAPLAIN.

- B. **Person Authorized to Direct the Disposition of Remains (PADD)** - Determining funeral arrangements can be difficult because the family usually has someone trying to help make decisions for them. However, only one person is specifically authorized by law to give instructions to the Coast Guard regarding the transportation, preparation and interment of the remains. That person is called the Person Authorized to Direct the Disposition of the Remains or PADD. The order of precedence for determining the PADD is the same as the order of precedence for determining the PNOK. The Coast Guard determines the PADD based upon the order of precedence and the information on the CG-4170A. Prepare the "Disposition Instructions" form with the PADD's name on it before you make the funeral arrangements visit

Note - The rights of the PADD are a personal right, meaning that the PADD has the final decision on what happens to the remains and that no one else may act for the PADD in these matters. However, if the PADD does not desire/is unable to carry out their duties, they may relinquish their PADD rights to the Coast Guard or to the next person in the PADD order of precedence. They do this by checking option 6 on "Disposition Instructions" form. The rights of the PADD then transfer to the next person in order of precedence.

- C. **Autopsy** - The Armed Forces Medical Examiner (AFME) may order an autopsy to determine the cause of death of a Coast Guard member. The autopsy provides the medical, scientific and legal basis to make conclusions about the relationship of any disease or injury to the cause of death. The PNOK's prior consent is not required. In all autopsy cases, you should sensitively advise the PNOK of the following general considerations:

- ☐ Depending on relative geographic locations of the remains and the pathologist, an autopsy may lead to some delay in the return of the remains. Delays, if any, are usually only a day or two.
- ☐ During the autopsy, some body tissues, parts or organs may be retained for further diagnostic, legal or scientific purposes and not returned with the remains. Later disposition will be performed in a humane and dignified manner.

(Note: Some religious denominations desire internment of all remains. If the family has questions or concerns regarding the retention of materials during the autopsy, you should contact the ISC DAO and the responsible MTF/pathologist to arrange return of all organs and tissues for burial, when no longer needed.)

- ☐ The final autopsy report may take some time. Sometimes, extensive laboratory tests are required or specimens are forwarded to other pathologists for review. The family will be able to obtain a copy of the final report with a request in writing and a copy of a photo ID, as required by law.

If CGIS is conducting an investigation into the death, questions about why an autopsy is being conducted should be referred to that agency; if other law enforcement agencies are in charge of the investigation, an appropriate representative should be located to address the PNOK's concerns.

D. Funeral/Interment Benefits - You will help the PADD understand the different burial/interment options and their specific reimbursement levels using "Disposition Instructions" Form. You will also help the PADD apply for reimbursement.

1) Burial/Interment Options and Reimbursement levels.

NOTE: The cost to transport remains from the place of death to the burial site selected by the PADD is a separate cost that is paid completely by the Coast Guard.

- ☐ The Coast Guard has initial custody of the remains. The Coast Guard arranges and pays for a casket and the preparation of the remains (cleaning, embalming) and then sends the remains to a funeral home selected by the PADD for viewing and burial services. The PADD will be reimbursed for authorized viewing and burial service expenses up to:

\$4,325 if burial is in a private civilian cemetery
\$3,000 if burial is in a government or veteran's cemetery

- ☐ The PADD has custody of the remains. The PADD arranges and pays for a casket and the preparation of the remains (cleaning, embalming) as well as arranges and pays for the viewing and burial services. The PADD will be reimbursed for authorized expenses up to:

\$6,900 if burial is in a private civilian cemetery
\$5,550 if burial is in a government or veteran's cemetery

- ☐ The Coast Guard has initial custody of the remains. The Coast Guard arranges and pays for a casket and the preparation of the remains (cleaning, embalming) and then sends the remains directly to a government cemetery for burial. The PADD will be reimbursed for authorized expenses up to **\$600**.

- ☐ The Government will pay an additional funeral and interment expense allowance as follows:

\$110 when remains are transferred directly for burial at sea or to a National Cemetery without using the services of a local funeral director.
\$400 when remains are to be cremated.

- ❑ Un-recovered Remains - When remains are not recovered, the family is authorized a memorial service and a memorial burial plot. The Coast Guard will reimburse the PADD up to up to \$1,390 for a memorial burial plot and up to \$3,000 of authorized expenses for a memorial service.
- ❑ Burial At Sea - In addition to the options listed above, the PADD may request burial-at-sea by the Coast Guard. The ISC DAO will make every effort to accommodate the PADD's request. Two restrictions will apply. The Coast Guard only buries cremated remains at sea and family members normally may not attend the burial at sea due to safety concerns and operational commitments.

The CACO will assist the family in their claim for reimbursement. The following procedures will be used to ensure proper and timely reimbursement. The CACO/family will provide the following documents to the appropriate ISC Decedent Affairs Officer for approval.

Copy of Death Certificate
Copy of the Bill
Copy of the Receipt of Payment
A completed Form SF 1164 with a brief description/justification for payment

The ISC DAO will review and approve the reimbursement request and fax those documents to the U.S. Coast Guard Finance Center at (757) 523-6906 (fax) for payment.

- 1) Escort of Remains - The Coast Guard is authorized to fund a round trip for one person who will act as special escort for the remains. This special escort may be a Coast Guard member, member of another service, civilian, or family member. Inform the PADD that the Coast Guard will provide a special escort for the remains. The Coast Guard special escort should be of the same rate/rank or higher than the member and is normally from the member's unit. If the PADD requests a special escort who is from another command, you will contact the command and request the escort. If the PADD requests a special escort from another service, contact Coast Guard Personnel Command at (202) 493-1200 immediately. Inform the PADD that the use of a special escort from another service may delay the arrival of the body due to logistical considerations with locating and transporting the escort. Funding for the special escort is provided by the ISC.
- 2) Making Funeral Arrangements – The PADD can begin planning the funeral immediately, but should hold off on a firm date until the remains arrive at the PADD's funeral home. Provide the family and the funeral home with the list of authorized and un-authorized funeral expenses. The ISC DAO can provide you with the list. Ensure both the PADD and the funeral home understand that the Coast Guard can only pay for items on the authorized expenses list. Request the funeral home bill the Coast Guard directly for all authorized expenses and bill the PADD for any un-authorized expenses. Give the bill to the ISC DAO, who has the funding and accounting data to process the bill for payment

- 3) Funeral Location and Family Travel – The Coast Guard does not restrict where the PADD may inter the remains. The Coast Guard will pay to transport the remains to the burial site. The Coast Guard will also pay for round trip transportation plus two-days per diem at the burial site for the member's immediate family (Parents of single member, Spouse and children of married member).
- 4) Military Funeral Honors - The Coast Guard will provide a Chaplain (if needed) and Military Funeral Honors, to include an Officer-in-Charge (OIC) or Petty Officer-in-Charge (POIC), a rifle squad, six casket-bearers and a bugler or recorded TAPS, if requested by the PADD. Chapter 19 of the Marine Corps Drill and Ceremonies Manual, SECNAVINST 5060.22 should be used to provide proper military funeral honors. The Instruction can be found at the web site of Commandant (G-WPM-2), <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wp/g-wpm/g-wpm-2/index.htm>. If the death was under other than honorable conditions, federal law prohibits the Coast Guard from providing Military Funeral Honors.
- 5) Funeral Flag - The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) will furnish a funeral flag to drape the coffin/urn and be given to the PNOK (spouse if married, parents if single). If the member was single and the parents are divorced, the DVA authorizes two flags, one for each spouse.
- 6) Headstone - The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) will furnish a headstone for all active duty members. In a government cemetery, the headstone is erected at no cost to the family. In a private cemetery, the family must pay such costs. Generally, within 90-120 days.

E. Funeral Arrangements Visit Checklist

- Determine the PADD _____
- Prepare Disposition Instructions Form _____
- Explain Funeral and Reimbursement Options to PADD _____
- Obtain a signed Disposition Instructions form _____
- Inform PADD of Coast Guard escort of remains. _____
- Determine receiving funeral home of PADD's choice. _____
- Inform PADD/dependents (spouse, dependent children under 21; if none, parents) that Coast Guard will pay travel costs and per diem to funeral site and return. _____
- Determine PADD's choice regarding government or private cemetery _____
- Inform PADD of eligibility and availability of funeral honors _____
- Relay PADD decision and name/address/telephone number of local receiving funeral home to ISC DAO. _____
- Advise beneficiary that survivor benefit applications will be addressed within approximately one week. _____
- Give list of authorized/unauthorized expenses to PADD and funeral home and explain list to both. _____
- Offer to go to funeral home with PADD _____
- Ask funeral home to bill Coast Guard directly for authorized expenses. _____
- Advise PADD not to schedule firm funeral date until the remains arrive at the receiving funeral home. _____
- Advise eligible next of kin that they may remain in government quarters for 180 days or they will receive their housing allowance for 180 days, if not living in government quarters _____
- Monitor personal effects and address inquiries to member's command. _____
- Advise PNOK you plan to attend funeral _____

SECTION 6: THE BENEFITS VISIT(S)

A. **Introduction** - This visit is designed to specifically educate the PNOK/Family/beneficiary about their benefits and have them sign the necessary claims forms.

Never visit the PNOK alone. Always take another person with you, preferably a chaplain.

To prepare for this visit, consult with the ISC DAO and determine what benefits accrue to the family and who are the beneficiaries. Then, as much as possible, prepare the necessary forms and have them ready for the family to sign. Most of the forms are available on the Internet or JetForm Filler. A listing of Internet sites is at the end of this section.

Print out a new Coast Guard Casualty Assistance Guide for each beneficiary. Use this new guide, highlight the benefits already received (i.e. Death Gratuity, funeral benefits) and then explain the additional benefits they may receive. As you talk about each benefit, have the beneficiary complete or sign the appropriate form. The CACO can sign as witness on the claim forms. Make sure you provide the beneficiary a copy of claims/applications submitted as well as keep a copy for your records.

Do not promise anything more than you are certain the Coast Guard will provide. As CACO, you are not a representative of the Social Security Administration (SSA) or Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) and have no control over how long it takes for the first benefits check to be paid from other agencies.

B. Internet sites for Decedent Affairs Forms

CG-PPC-1884 – SBP Application for Annuity -
<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/psc/MSWordforms/index.htm>

DD-1300 – Report of Casualty (Completed by G-WPM-2) - CG JetForm Filler

DD-397 – Claim Certification and Voucher for Death Gratuity - CG JetForm Filler

DD Form 1172 – Application for Uniformed Services Identification Card Deers Enrollment
- CG JetForm Filler

CG –3853 - Personnel Effects Inventory and Disposition - CG JetForm Filler

SGLI Forms <http://www.insurance.va.gov/SGLIsite/forms/forms.htm>

SGLV-8283 – Claim for Death Benefits

SGLV-8283A – Claim for Family Coverage Death Benefits

SGLV-8700 – Report of Death of Family Member (Completed by G-WPM-2)

SF1174 – Claim for Unpaid Compensation of Deceased Member of the Uniformed Services -
<http://www.dior.whs.mil/forms/SF1174.PDF>

Social Security Publications and Forms - <http://www.ssa.gov/online/forms.html>

SSA-2-F6, Application for Wife's or Husband's Insurance Benefits

SSA-8-F4, Application for Lump Sum Death Payment

SSA-10-BK, Application for Widow's or Widower's Insurance Benefits

VA Compensation and Pension Forms - <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/candpforms.htm>

VA 21-534- Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension
and Accrued Benefits by a Surviving Spouse or Child (Including Death
Compensation if Applicable)

VA 21-535 - Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by Parent(s) (8
pages; 1-4 are instructions; 5-7 are form; page 8 is SSA form 24)

VA 21-2008 - Application For United States Flag For Burial Purposes (3 pages)

VA 21-530 - Application For Burial Benefits (Under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 23) (4 pages)

<http://www.cem.va.gov/pdf/401330.pdf>

VA-40-1330 - Application for Standard Headstone or Marker <http://www.cem.va.gov>

C. Benefits Visit Checklist

Confirm all benefits and beneficiaries with ISC DOA _____

Obtain copy of DD 1300 - Report of Casualty from
Commandant (G-WPM-2). _____

Confirm ISC DAO and Commandant (G-WPM-2)
phone numbers in case you have to call during PNOK's visit. _____

Print out new Coast Guard Casualty Assistance Guide
for each beneficiary _____

Prepare all claim forms, as much as possible _____

Arrange for next of kin to visit the DVA office
regarding associated benefits. _____

Advise Commandant (G-WPM-2), Integrated Support
Command Decedent Affairs Officer and other
appropriate agencies of next of kin address change. _____

Advise Commandant (G-WPM-2) to record birth of
member's child, which occurs after casualty incident. _____

Follow-up Action Items

Monitor progress on applications for survivor benefit
until benefits are received by the NOK. _____

Inform Integrated Support Command DAO
when NOK no longer requires or desires help. _____

D. Survivor Benefits	Approximate Receipt Timeframes
Death Gratuity (\$12,000)	48-72 hours
Eligible dependents travel to funeral	As necessary
Servicemen's Group Life Insurance (SGLI)	7 days from receipt of complete claim
DVA Pension (Non-service connected death)	120-180 days
DVA DIC (Service connected death)	3 days
Housing allowances for 180 days (dependents)--or continued residence in government quarters	7-14 days
Headstone	90-120 days
Social Security Survivor benefits	60-90 days
Social Security Lump Sum Death Benefit (\$255)(must be survived by spouse or child)	30-90 days
Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) Refund (paid to SGLI beneficiary)	90-120 days
Montgomery G.I. Bill (MGIB) Education Program Refund (paid to SGLI Beneficiary)	90-120 days
Dependents/household goods relocation (w/in 1 yr.)	Dependents' discretion
Unpaid compensation and Allowances (Unpaid Reenlistment Bonus and unused leave).	60-90 days
Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) (if member was retired, died on active duty in "line of duty," or died on active duty Not in "line of duty" but had over 20 years service)	60-90 days

SECTION 7: TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Arlington National Cemetery (703) 695-3250
Arlington, VA 22211-5003 (703) 697-9486

American Red Cross - Armed Forces Emergency Center
430 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20006-5307 (202) 737-8300

Coast Guard

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) (800) 222-0364

Coast Guard Health Benefits Advisor (HBA) (800) 942-2422

Personnel Services Center
Retiree and Annuitant Services (RAS) (800) 772-8724
444 S.E. Quincy St., Topeka, KS 66683-3591

Personnel Services Center
Separations Services (SES)
444 S.E. Quincy St., Topeka, KS 66683-3591

Mutual Assistance
2100 2nd Street, S. W., Washington, DC, 20593 (800) 881-2462

Department of Veterans Affairs
Regional Office for Benefits Information (800) 827-1000
<http://www.va.gov>

Department of Veteran Affairs (VA)
(Headstone/Grave markers)
810 Vermont Ave. N.W. Washington, DC 20240-0001 (800) 697-6947

Internal Revenue Service (800) 829-1040
<http://www.irs.gov>

Office of Service members' Group Life Insurance (OSGLI)
213 Washington Street, Newark, NJ 07102-2999 (800) 419-1473

Social Security Administration (800) 772-1213
<http://www.ssa.gov>

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (800)-959-8277
Washington, DC

TRICARE (800) 931-9501
<http://www.tricare.osd.mil>